Music at Convocation Hall

Music at Convocation Hall II

Celebration of Shostakovitch's 100th Birthday

Scott St. John, violin
Marina Hoover, cello
Patricia Tao, piano

Friday, October 28 2005
7:15 pm *Pre-Concert Introduction*
by **David Cook**
Main floor, Convocation Hall
8:00 pm *Concert*

Convocation Hall
Arts Building
University of Alberta

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Program

Trio No. 1, Op, 8 (1923) — Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Trio No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 67 — Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

I. Andante; Moderato
II. Allegro con brio
III. Largo
IV. Allegretto

Intermission

Trio in A Minor, Op. 50 — Pyotr Ill'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

I. Moderato assai
IIa. Tema con Variazioni
IIb. Variazione e Finale e Coda

This concert is generously supported by the University of Alberta's Distinguished Visitor program.

Ms Hoover's appearance is made possible through the support of the University of Alberta Distinguished Visitor program.

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Program Notes
by Niyati Dhokai

Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich
b. St. Petersburg, 25 September 1906
d. Moscow, 9 August 1975

Shostakovich was a child prodigy as a pianist and composer. He attended Petrograd Conservatory headed by Alexander Glazunov, and his First Symphony was written as his graduation piece. Although he attempted to pursue a dual career as pianist and composer, his style of playing was considered "dry" and was not appreciated by audiences. His First Symphony, however, drew the attention of conductor Bruno Walter, who premiered the work. That event marked the shift of Shostakovich's focus largely to composing.

Shostakovich suffered through two denunciations of his music by the Soviet government. The first was instigated by Stalin against Shostakovich's opera, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, for being "formalist" (that is, concerned with abstract form rather than inspiring the Soviet people). During this time, Shostakovich taught at the Conservatory and wrote a large amount of chamber works to express ideas what he would not have been able to in his public symphonies. Shostakovich was again denounced for "formalism" in 1948. This led to the composition of film scores, works aimed at official rehabilitation into society (which was fully accomplished only after Stalin's death), and other work that the composer kept private. Shostakovich suffered from poor health during the last years of his life, which is reflected in the dark nature of his later works.

Shostakovich is best known for his cycles of symphonies and string quartets, of which there are fifteen of each. Although he went through an avant-garde phase at the beginning of his compositional career and occasionally experimented with such techniques as atonality and the use of tone rows, he is best known for heavily Romantic music that was influenced by Mahler, whose music Shostakovich was introduced to by his good friend Ivan Sollertinsky. This influence of Mahler's music, including characteristic use of sharp contrasts, can be seen from the Fourth Symphony onwards.

Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 8 (1923)

Shostakovich wrote only two piano trios. This first trio was composed when Shostakovich was only 17 years old, while he was still a student at the Petrograd Conservatory. It is dedicated to Tatyana Glivenko, who is considered to be the love of Shostakovich's youth. The emotions in the well-constructed composition reflect an idyllic phase in Shostakovich's life. The work is one movement with many distinct sections; it requires a great deal of technical ability from the performers as well as the ability to work together to express the work's many contrasting emotions.

Piano Trio No. 2, Op. 67 (1944)

Andante/Moderato
Allegro con brio
Largo
Allegretto

This four-movement work was written as a memorial to Shostakovich's close friend Ivan Sollertinsky. The first movement begins with a theme played in harmonics by the cello. The other instruments join in and the movement develops, utilizing folk melodies, into a massive climax and ends with a simple theme. The second movement is a surging, free and rhythmic scherzo, in sharp contrast to the following Largo, a lament. This third movement begins as a chaconne in the piano, with the violin and cello weaving above the piano chords. The finale, which reintroduces a theme from the first movement, has a great deal of energy but ends quietly.

Pyotr IlyichTchaikovsky
b. Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia, 7 May 1840
d. St. Petersburg, 6 November 1893

Trio in A Minor, Op. 50 (1882)

Pezzo Elegiaco (Moderato assai - Allegro Giusto)
(A) Tema Con Variazoni - (B) Variazioni Finale e coda

Tchaikovsky's A Minor Trio, a memorial for his friend, the pianist Nikolai Rubinstein, may be the most difficult work that Tchaikovsky wrote for piano, particularly the second movement. Despite its length (over 40 minutes), it is quite popular, due to its magnificent lyricism and the fantastic conclusiveness of its final statement.

The first movement is melancholy, though passionate and filled with lovely melodies. It contains a question-answer dialogue between the instruments, as well extensive mood and tempo changes. The second movement is a set of variations, followed by a finale and coda. The folk theme of the variations is said to have been inspired by a day spent in the country with Rubinstein, where the two were entertained by the music of peasants. There are eleven variations, introduced by the piano. In the first, the melody is presented by the violin, whose voice becomes the countermelody to the cello's presentation of the melody in the second variation. The third variation features a "scherzo section" from the piano. The theme is played in the minor mode in the fourth variation. The fifth variation features a troika, a waltz is featured in the sixth, and the eighth contains a fugue (listed as "optional" by the composer, and not included in tonight's performance). The seventh variation features chords in the piano part that are interspersed by the violin and cello. The ninth variation is a lament, followed by a lively mazurka in the tenth. The cello features the bass line in the eleventh variation, and the variation ends with the theme gradually fading away.

The finale begins in a lively and festive manner, although the composition abruptly abandons this mood for the return of the melancholy opening theme of the first movement. This is followed by a funeral march played by the piano, and the strings fade away playing the opening theme.

Two-time Grammy nominee **Marina Hoover** was born in Edmonton. She studied cello under David Soyer at the Curtis Institute of Music, and obtained a Masters at Yale under Aldo Parisot. She was founding cellist of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, which rocketed to international prominence after winning both the Young Concert Artists auditions and the 1992 Banff International String Quartet Competition.

In her 13 years with the St. Lawrence, Ms Hoover performed at The White House, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street "Y", The Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall (London), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), and Theatre De Ville (Paris). The St. Lawrence has been the resident quartet at Spoletto USA since 1996.

The quartet's major recording label debut, Schumann *String Quartets 1 and 3*, won the Juno award for Best Classical recording (1999), and the Preis der Deutschen Schallplatten Kritik (2001). It was voted one of the most important classical recordings of the 1990s by *Opus Magazine*. In 2002, the St. Lawrence's third CD, *Yiddishbbuk: The Chamber Works of Oswaldo Golijov* was nominated for two Grammy awards as well as a Juno Award for Best Classical Recording.

Ms Hoover's solo career has included concertos with Toronto Symphony, Red Deer Symphony, Symphony Nova Scotia, Belo Horizonte Symphony (Brazil), Edmonton Symphony, Saskatoon Symphony, Yale Chamber Orchestra, and the Curtis Orchestra.
For four years Marina Hoover was Artist in Residence at Stanford University, where she co-directed the string program and designed and ran a summer institute for chamber musicians.

Ms Hoover currently maintains an active performing schedule of both solo and chamber music. Recent performances include appearances with the Chicago String Quartet, Chamber Music Chicago, the Ameropa trio, and with pianist James Giles. She teaches chamber music at the Northwestern University School of Music.

Scott St. John captures the attention of the musical world through his riveting and virtuosic performances on violin, and viola. Highlights of past seasons include vibrant performances of Bartok, Dvorák and Korngold Concertos throughout North America, and the American premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies' "A Spell for Green Corn", conducted by Keith Lockhart. Audiences of the Boston Pops, Cleveland, Philadelphia and National Arts Centre (Ottawa) Orchestras, and those of the Cincinnati, Grand Rapids, Toledo, Montreal, Toronto, Utah and Vancouver Symphonies, among others, have also shared in St. John's obvious joy in performing.

Abroad, St. John has appeared with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Flemish Radio Orchestra, Lisbon's Gulbenkian Orchestra, the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, New Zealand Chamber Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic in London and the Hamburg Sinfonia. He made his debut in Japan, performing with the late Alexander Schneider, and in recitals in Osaka and Hiroshima. He recently returned to Japan for Gala performances in Tokyo's Casals Hall.

Winner of the 1989 Young Concert Artists Award, St. John made his New York City recital debut to critical acclaim in the 1991 Young Concert Artists Series at the 92nd Street Y. Playing violin, viola and MIDI violin, he made his Washington, DC recital debut in the 1993 Series at the Kennedy Center. In recent seasons, Scott has performed in recital on Ravinia's Rising Stars Series, at Spivey Hall(GA), as well as at Boston's Gardner Museum, Pepperdine University(CA), the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, DC's Freer Gallery, the La Jolla Chamber Music Society, the Tilles Center(NY) and Ruth Eckerd Hall(FL). His recital for the University of Wyoming, part of a statewide tour, was featured on NPR's "Performance Today". He has also been featured on A&E's "Breakfast with the Arts" .

An avid chamber musician, St. John frequently performs with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (NY), Da Camera of Houston, on nationwide Musicians from Marlboro tours, and at the Seattle, Spoleto, and Vancouver music festivals. European festival engagements include France's Evian Music Festival, Germany's Schloss Moritzburg Chamber Music Festival, and the Spoleto Festival in Italy. Interested in creative programming, Scott served as Founder and Artistic Director of Millennium, a contemporary music ensemble for top young chamber musicians, from 1994-97, and in 1998 his "Chamber Music Company" launched a new series that included world premieres and multi-media collaborations in New York City's Merkin Hall. Deeply committed to education and outreach, St. John employs his exceptional communication skills to connect with and inspire students and adults alike. St. John currently holds a prestigious performance/faculty position at the University of Toronto, and frequently serves as a faculty member at the Encore School for Strings.

Scott St. John's recordings can be heard on Marquis Classics, NAXOS, CRI, and Ancalagon Records. His newest release, "Salon Parisien" is on CBC records. A project to record the Brahms Sonatas for violin and viola is forthcoming.

In addition to a 2003 Avery Fisher Career Grant, his many awards include Young Concert Artists, the 1994 Virginia D. Moore Award for Most Promising Young Canadian Artist, Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award, First Prize in the 1987 Alexander Schneider Violin and Viola Competition and a top prize in the 1992 Munich International Violin Competition.

Born in London, Ontario, St. John began his violin studies at age three with Richard Lawrence and subsequently worked with Gerard Jarry in Paris and David Cerone of the Cleveland Institute of Music.He studied viola with Ralph Aldrich of the University of Western Ontario and Robert Vernon, principal viola of the Cleveland Orchestra. In 1990, St. John graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied violin with Jascha Brodsky and Arnold Steinhardt, and chamber music with Felix Galimir.

Pianist **Patricia Tao**, founding member of the Guild Trio from 1988-1998, has led an active career as both soloist and chamber musician. As pianist of the Trio, she performed throughout the United States and Europe, with appearances in major North American cities, including New York, Los Angeles, San Diego, Toronto, Vancouver, and Washington, D.C. With the Trio, she won the prestigious USIA Artistic Ambassador competition, resulting in a seven-country European tour. The following year, her trio was awarded the position of Trio-in-Residence at the Tanglewood Music Center, where they were lauded by the Boston Globe as a "beautiful new landmark" on the concert stage.

As soloist, Dr Tao toured the United States for Columbia Artist's Community Concerts series, and in 1990, was reinvited as an "Artistic Ambassador" for the USIA, with recitals in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Winner of numerous awards, she was the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein scholarship and the David McCord Arts Award upon graduation from Harvard University. Summer festival credits include the International Musicians Seminar in Prussia Cove, England, Rutgers Summerfest, the Cape May Music Festival, Apple Hill Music Festival, the Summer Serenades at the Staller Center, Niederstotzingen Festival in Germany, and the International Arts Festival in France.

Dr Tao's live performances have been broadcast on National Public Radio's "Performance Today," WNYC's "Around New York," WQXR's "The Listening Room, the public television series "Premiere Performances" out of St. Louis, and "Our Music" on CBC. Dedicated to the performance of new works, Dr Tao (with the Guild Trio) commissioned and premiered numerous works, including William Bolcom's "Spring Trio," Sheila Silver's "To the Spirit Unconquered," Harvey Sollberger's "From Winter's Frozen Stillness," and works by Bradley Lubman, Daniel Weymouth, Peter Winkler, and Perry Goldstein. Dr Tao is currently preparing a CD of works by Chinese composers who have emigrated to the West. Previous recordings include Sheila Silver's "To the Spirit Unconquered" on the CRI label and a solo CD on the Arktos label featuring works of Schubert, Liszt and Corigliano.

An avid chamber musician, in 2002 Dr Tao launched Hear's to Your Health Concerts, held at the Walter Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre at the University of Alberta. These intimate chamber concerts feature musicians from the Edmonton musical community as well as international artists. In recent years, she has collaborated with the Cassatt Quartet, clarinetist Michel Lethiec, violist Marcus Thompson, and cellist Marina Hoover.

Dr Tao received her undergraduate education from Radcliffe College at Harvard University, her master's degree with distinction from Indiana University and her doctorate from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where her principal teachers were Leonard Shure, Gyorgy Sebok and Gilbert Kalish and in chamber music, Bernard Greenhouse, Leon Fleisher, Julius Levine and Timothy Eddy. She has given master classes at numerous schools, including the University of Ottawa, Ithaca College, and the Conservatories of Barcelona, Prague and Bratislava. She has taught at the University of Virginia, Western Washington University, and in 2002, was appointed Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Alberta.

Upcoming Events

October
31 Monday, 12:00 pm
Noon Hour Organ Recital
Hallowe'en special
A variety of organ repertoire played
by students, faculty and guests
of the University of Alberta
Department of Music
Free admission

November
5 Saturday, 8:00 pm
The University of Alberta
Symphonic Wind Ensemble
William Street, Director
Rocky Point Holiday: Nelson
Trauermusik: Wagner
Sinfonietta: Dahl
Dance Suite: Horowitz
Toccata and Fugue in D Minor: JS Bach
Scenes from *the Louvre*: Dello Joio
Marche Hongroise: Berloiz
Twelve Seconds to the Moon: Smith
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

7 Monday, 12:00 pm
Music at Noon, **Convocation Hall Student Recital Series**
Featuring students from the
Department of Music
Free admission

3 Sunday, 3:00 pm
Music at Convocation Hall II
Nora Bumanis, harp
Julia Shaw, harp
Laura Neeland, harp
Elise Neeland, harp
Featuring works by JS Bach,
GF Handel, E Granados,
JP Rameau, A Part, J Press,
J Marson, J Estacio, C Salzedo,
A Gilliland, M Forsyth, J McCune
Admission: $15/student/senior, $20/adult

14 Monday, 12:00 pm
Noon Hour Organ Recital
A variety of organ repertoire played
by students, faculty and guests
of the University of Alberta
Department of Music
Free admission

14 Monday, 8:00 pm
Faculty Recital
Milton Schlosser, piano
Admission: $15/student/senior, $20/adult

20 Sunday, 3:00 pm
Graduate Student Recital
The Pink Element Ensemble
Wei Hsi Hu, conductor
with
Jeremy Spurgeon, piano
Daniel Davis, saxophone
presents
Chichester Psalms: Bernsteins
and other works by Daunais, Rameau,
Pearsall, Brahms, Barber and others
St Timothy's Anglican Church
Free admission

20 Sunday, 8:00 pm
U of A Davis Concert Organ
Constellations: Organ Extravaganza
A Concert in Honour of the late
Dr Stuart Davis
(University of Windsor, Ontario)
Featuring the consummate artistry of
Distinguished Visiting Artist
David Palmer, organ
with **Brian Jones, percussion**
and *Duo Majoya* : **Marnie Giesbrecht**
and **Joachim Segger, organists**
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Widor, Cabena
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